

NEWS

From the Office of

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Board to Consider Training Program for Alternative Energy

SAN BERNARDINO – As alternative energy expands into a major industry, the need for trained technicians is growing. The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday will consider a proposal by Supervisor Brad Mitzelfelt to provide funding to Copper Mountain College to develop curriculum for training technicians to work in the solar and wind power industries.

“We need good-paying jobs for the social and economic health of our growing communities,” said Supervisor Mitzelfelt, who represents the High Desert. “This is a rapidly expanding industry with a great need for trained workers. This is the kind of program that can help our residents participate in a new and exciting sector of the economy.”

Mitzelfelt proposes to use \$45,000 of his district discretionary funds to assist Copper Mountain College in Joshua Tree in developing a renewable/sustainable energy technologies program.

There is already interest in developing more than 100 wind and solar energy projects in San Bernardino County, with the vast majority of those proposed for the High Desert.

The existing labor pool lacks the necessary skills to fill these employers’ needs. The college is endeavoring to address this critical shortage by developing the specific skills students will need to work in the industry.

The contribution to Copper Mountain College follows other similar investments in workforce education and training programs made by Mitzelfelt in the past year. In November 2007, Mitzelfelt allocated \$75,000 to Barstow Community College to assist with the development of a nursing program. In October 2007, he allocated \$150,000 to Victor Valley College to double the size of its nursing program. And in March 2007, he contributed \$500,000 to help create an aviation technician training program at Southern California Logistics Airport.